

lemons, lemon juice and crab boil. It is also customary to add Irish or red potatoes and sweet corn to the "boil". These are consumed along with the crawfish.

5. Once cooked, remove the crawfish from the boiling water and serve. Crawfish meat is removed most easily when the crawfish are still warm.

FREEZING

The availability and price of crawfish vary throughout the crawfish season. For this reason, many people freeze crawfish meat when crawfish are plentiful and low in cost.

1. Although crawfish may be frozen whole with good results, most people freeze only the peeled tail meat.

2. After peeling, wash all traces of the fat from the tails with clean, cold water. If the fat is not removed, it may become rancid quickly in frozen storage, imparting an unpleasant taste to the meat.

3. Just before packaging the tails for freezing, dip them in a weak lemon juice solution. A solution that is too strong will impart a lemon flavor to the meat.

4. Lemon juice will prevent the crawfish tails from turning "blue." This darkening of the meat results from freezing. Although harmless, discoloration is unappetizing in appearance.

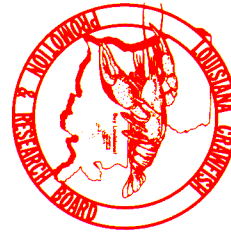
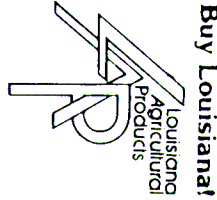
5. Crawfish meat may be frozen for long-term storage with excellent results. However, the meat may, under some conditions, undergo certain undesirable changes in texture and flavor if frozen improperly. To minimize these changes, crawfish meat should be frozen immediately, using small containers designed for freezing foods.

6. Prechilling the meat in your refrigerator prior to freezing will assist in a rapid freeze. In addition, water poured into the container with the crawfish meat can be chilled with ice. Freeze and store the meat at 0°F (-18°C) or lower.

CRAWFISH CREOLE

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| 1 large onion, chopped | 1 medium bell pepper, |
| ½ c. celery, chopped | chopped |
| 2 T. cooking oil | 1 small bay leaf |
| 2 tomatoes, minced | Seasoning to taste |
| 2 c. water | 3 c. cooked rice |
| 1 lb. crawfish | ½ c. green onion, |
| ¼ c. minced parsley | chopped |

Saute onion and celery in oil, add tomatoes, continue cooking for 5 minutes. Add water, crawfish, bell pepper, bay leaf and season to taste. Bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer one hour. Add rice, green onion and parsley. Cover, remove from heat and allow to stand 20 to 30 minutes before serving. Garnish. Serves 6.



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Naturally Louisiana! CRAWFISH



TODAY'S INDUSTRY

Visitors to South Louisiana over the years have discovered a food of gourmet proportions not found in many parts of the United States...**Crawfish.**

Both market incentives and technological advances have brought the Louisiana pond crawfish industry to the point of taking off as a major farming enterprise in addition to natural production. A large increase in pond acreage in the last few years has made the need to find markets outside Louisiana even more pressing.

At one point, pond-raised crawfish were seen by rice farmers as a way to make it through the rough times being experienced by the rice industry. Now crawfish has a solid future as a large cash crop for Louisiana farmers.

Although the Atchafalaya Basin has been Louisiana's historical source of crawfish, availability fluctuates from year to year. A successful season depends on a combination of favorable summer, fall and spring weather factors outside the control of crawfishermen in the basin. Pond crawfish production has added stability to the market and enhanced the processing industry.

Basin crawfish are usually available only three to four months of the year. However, with the large-scale addition of pond acres, live crawfish are now becoming available seven months of the year, from November through early

summer. New freezing techniques and the removal of the fat from the crawfish gives them a shelf life of up to 12 months.

AVAILABILITY

Due to natural production and improved crawfish farming operations, crawfish marketing and processing are fast becoming a year-round business. In fact, fresh meat and live crawfish are now available from late November until early June. However, March, April and May are still the months when crawfish are most plentiful.

MARKET FORMS

Crawfish can be purchased live or cooked, whole or peeled, fresh or frozen. It takes approximately seven pounds of live crawfish to yield one pound of peeled tails. Crawfish fat can also be purchased separately as most people think it is the key to flavoring most crawfish dishes.

NUTRITION

Crawfish are not only delicious, but high in nutritional value. This low-calorie edible meat is found in the tail. One quarter pound of crawfish tails contains only 82 calories as compared to 242 calories found in one quarter pound of ground beef. Crawfish also provide all the nutrients necessary for good health and well-being. For example,

they are a good source of calcium, phosphorous, iron, protein, and the B vitamins (thiamine, riboflavin, and niacin).

BOILING

1. Crawfish should be inspected and the dead crawfish discarded.
2. Crawfish should be washed in clean, cool water just prior to cooking. A #3 washtub works nicely as a washing tank. Contrary to popular belief, crawfish do not need to be "purged" with salt during washing. This practice is entirely optional.
3. Crawfish are cooked by placing the live crustaceans in boiling water and cooking for five minutes if the meat is to be frozen or used in other dishes, or for ten minutes if the crawfish are to be enjoyed at a "crawfish boil." Don't start timing the cooking until the water returns to a boil after adding the crawfish. For crawfish boils, many people like to "soak" the crawfish in the seasoned water for ten minutes after cooking. Be certain the heat has been turned off before soaking.
4. Crawfish to be peeled for freezing or use in other dishes such as stew, bisque or etouffee' should not be cooked in seasoned water. However, if crawfish are to be served at a "crawfish boil" add about one pound of salt per five gallons of water and other seasonings to taste. For example, many people add red pepper, garlic, onions,

CRAWFISH ETOUFFEE

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| ¼ lb. butter or margarine | ¼ c. fresh parsley, chopped |
| 1 c. onions, chopped | 2 t. cornstarch |
| 1 c. celery, chopped | ½ c. water |
| 1 c. bell pepper, chopped | 1 8 oz. can tomato sauce (opt.) |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced | ½ t. black pepper |
| ¼ tsp. red papper | Paprika for color |
| ¼ c. green onion tops, chopped | 1 lb. crawfish tails |

Saute onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic in butter until tender crisp (5 minutes). Then add ½ cup water and simmer covered for 15 minutes, or until vegetables are tender. Next, stir in crawfish, green onions, parsley, and tomato sauce (opt.). Dissolve cornstarch in ½ cup water and add to mixture. Season to taste and mix thoroughly. Cover and cook 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve hot over rice. Serves 5-6.

CRAWFISH PATTIES

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| 1 bell pepper, ground | Salt |
| 1 stalk celery, ground | Red & black pepper |
| 2 lbs. crawfish tails, ground | 1 T. crawfish fat |
| ½ c. bread crumbs | Biscuit dough |

Mix bell pepper, celery and crawfish. Cook in open pan on slow fire for about 15 minutes. Season with fat, salt and pepper to taste. Add bread crumbs and stir. Make cupcake shells from biscuit dough and fill with crawfish mixture. Bake at 450°F for about 6 minutes. Makes about 30 patties.

CRAWFISH CASSEROLE

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| 2 c. cooked rice | 2 cloves garlic, minced |
| 2 lbs. crawfish tails | ½ can tomatoes |
| 1 onion, chopped | 1 c. water |
| ¼ c. bell pepper, chopped | 2 T. oil |

Wither onion, bell pepper and garlic in oil. Add tomatoes, water and crawfish tails. Cook 30 minutes over medium heat. Add rice, mix well and serve. Serves 4-6.

CRAWFISH JAMBALAYA

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| 1 lb. sausage, sliced | 2 c. water |
| 1 c. bell pepper, chopped | 1 can (16 oz.) tomatoes |
| 1 c. celery, chopped | ½ c. stewed tomatoes |
| 1 c. onion, chopped | 1 lb. crawfish tails |
| ½ c. green onions, chopped | 2 t. Creole seasoning or salt and pepper, to taste |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced | 1 t. hot sauce |
| 1 c. rice, uncooked | |

Saute sausage, bell peppers, celery, onions, and garlic in a large skillet. Cook until tender but not brown. Stir in remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Stir once or twice, reduce heat, cover and simmer 20 minutes or until rice is tender. Mixture should be slightly moist. Adjust seasonings to taste. Fluff with fork. Serves 10.